

AF 8/7

Special Working Group on South and Southern Africa

Public
Information
Series



United States Department of State
Bureau of Public Affairs
Washington, D.C.

June 1986

NEWARK PUBLIC LIBRARY

JUL 7 1986

U. S. GOVT. PUBS.
DEPOSITORY 326

The Working Group was formed at the direction of the President in the fall of 1985. It is an interagency effort led by the Department of State to communicate U.S. goals and objectives in South Africa to domestic and foreign audiences. The Working Group also builds cooperation between U.S. Government agencies and private groups that seek positive involvement to promote fundamental change in South Africa.

Apartheid, South Africa's system of legally enshrined racism, is contrary to the principles of liberty and equality of opportunity on which the United States was founded. It violates basic human rights. The Administration is categorically opposed to this practice and has sought actively to promote a process of peaceful and rapid change away from apartheid toward a nonracial South Africa.

U.S. influence in South Africa is limited, but our history, our concern for the protection of human rights, and our role as leader of the free world are fully consistent with U.S. involvement to induce change toward a more just society.

The central theme of U.S. policy is one of support and pressure for constructive change toward a postapartheid system in which all South Africans participate, where the rights of both majorities and minorities are respected. In this regard, we reject the premise that it is necessary to destroy South Africa

to change it. Consequently, U.S. policy is firmly opposed to punitive economic sanctions.

As a nation of builders, not destroyers, a central element of the U.S. role should include efforts to prepare South Africans for a nonapartheid future. Such efforts span a wide range of fields through government, nongovernment, and cooperative programs and activities. The Administration does not believe that constructive purposes will be served by actions that could undermine or destabilize the economic base of South Africa, which remains a source of hope for the future of its citizens and its neighbors throughout southern Africa.

To underscore the Administration's commitment to these goals and beliefs, the Working Group conducts activities aimed at the following objectives:

- To respond to the American public's high level of interest about U.S. policy toward South Africa, through an active program of speeches, seminars, publications, and press briefings—ensuring that constructive suggestions from the public are brought promptly to the attention of U.S. policy makers;
- To encourage the private sector—broadly defined from businesses to religious groups—to become meaningfully involved in promoting the emergence of a nonracial society in South Africa and in helping the black majority to overcome the legacies of apartheid;

- To explain Administration goals to Congress and to work intensively to develop a consensus on U.S. policy which furthers America's interests and enables the United States to play a useful role in South Africa;
- When asked, to serve as a resource for state and local governments seeking information about U.S. policy on divestment and positive alternatives to disengagement and loss of American influence in South Africa;
- To encourage and facilitate U.S. Government agencies—especially the Agency for International Development, United States Information Agency, and Department of Commerce—in carrying out programs totaling more than \$50 million to help those disadvantaged by apartheid; and
- To communicate U.S. policy goals and programs to audiences beyond the United States, particularly in Europe, South Africa, and other parts of Africa.

For further information contact:

The Working Group on South
and Southern Africa
U.S. Department of State
SAWG, Room 3243
2201 C Street, NW.
Washington, D.C. 20520

READER
FICHE

SI. 71/5: